

Story 1259 (1988 Tape 1

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of Nevşehir Province

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Young Nasreddin Hoca Guards the Door

One day while Nasreddin Hoca was still a child, his mother went to the river to wash clothes.¹ Before she left, she said to her son, "While I am gone, guard the door. Do not leave it alone at any time, for if you do, thieves may get into the house and steal some of our belongings."

"All right, Mother," replied the boy.

After his mother had gone to the river, Nasreddin Hoca leaned his shoulder against the door and began to wait for return. After he had leaned against the door for some time, he became tired of doing this. He also wanted to be closer to his mother. He wanted to join her at the river, but he remembered her order not to leave the door unattended. After thinking about this matter for a few minutes, he solved his problem by lifting the door off its hinges, loading it on his back, and carrying it to the place along the river where his mother

¹In some Turkish villages it is still a common practice to do the family laundry along the bank of a stream. Often the women so engaged take with them a large cauldron (kazan) in which to heat water.

Story 1259

was washing clothes.²

²This anecdote does not usually have Nasreddin Hoca as the protagonist. It is more often some more hapless person, such as Crazy Mehmet or a keloğlan (literally, bald boy), an unfortunate but sympathetic folk type.